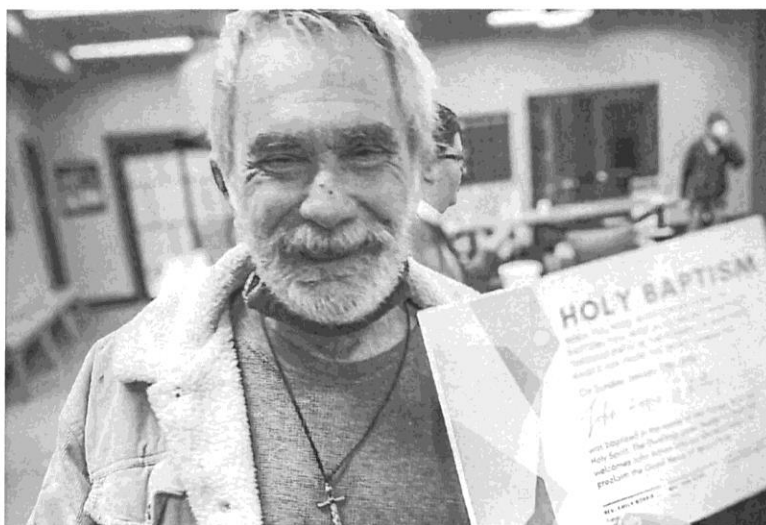
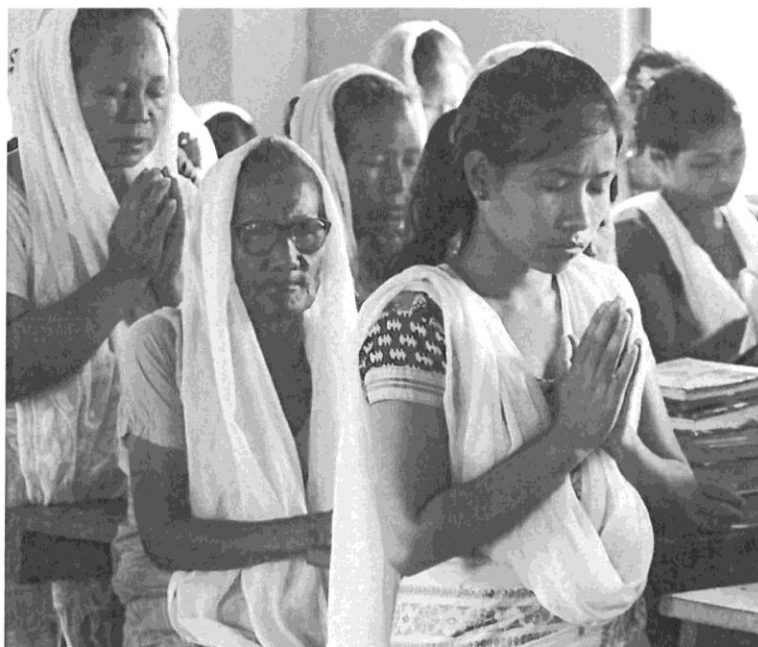


# ANNUAL REPORT

2021



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



## A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP

*Elizabeth  
Eaton*

Dear friends in Christ,

The last year has been one of adapting and learning. In many places we have seen vibrant and vital ministry spring forth from changes made due to the pandemic. Digital worship opportunities have introduced to our congregations people who may never have walked into one of our buildings. Many congregations have found new ways to invite people to share their generosity through online giving. And many ministries have found just how vital they are as they continue to serve alongside people in their communities.

The first chapter of James, verse 17, reminds us that "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." Yes, this has been a season of change, but Scripture also reminds us that we serve a generous, steadfast God.

While we stay rooted in God's enduring, unchanging promise, God also gives us the gifts of creativity and learning. Across all three expressions of the church we have used those gifts to serve God, love our neighbor and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In this time of change, we have opened our arms wider to meet people where they are, living into the reality that we are not defined or confined by the four walls of our buildings.

Through all this, I am so grateful for your generous sharing of creativity, time, talents and resources. All good gifts do come from God, and we are called to share and use those gifts. We have and will continue to answer that call. There is still much change and learning to come, but God's steadfast love energize us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

*Elizabeth A. Eaton*

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

## CONTENTS

## PAGE

Staff Information .....	1
Church Council, Delegates, Ministries, Committee Members 2021.....	2
Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda .....	3
Annual Congregational Meeting .....	4
Report of the 2021 Nominating Committee.....	5
Reports of the Nominating Committee 2022 .....	6
Trinity Lutheran Church Audit Committee .....	7
Report of the Pastor .....	8
Youth and Family Coordinator Report .....	9-10
President's Report.....	11
Building & Grounds Committee .....	12-13
Christian Education Committee .....	13-14
Communication Committee and Trinity Library Subcommittee .....	15
Global & Local Outreach Committee .....	16
Personnel Committee and Stewardship Committee.....	17-18
Giving Celebration for 2021 .....	19
Trinity Learning Center and Preschool .....	20
Worship Committee and Music and Arts Report.....	21-22
Trinity Lutheran Church Women.....	22-23
2021 Trinity Women's Treasurer's Report.....	24
From Our Church Records, 2021 .....	25
Ministerial Acts.....	26



## **2021 Annual Report**

### **Trinity Lutheran Church's Vision is to be**

- ❖ *A Christ and Scripture centered congregation*
- ❖ *A mission centered congregation constantly evaluating its vision to accomplish its mission and*
- ❖ *A congregation whose members sense they belong to the Body of Christ and, in turn want to provide for the needs of others.*

### **Pastor**

Reverend Dr. Clay Schmit

### **Our Staff**

Todd Lewis, Youth & Family Coordinator

Doris Way, Administrative Secretary

Tammy Koch, Financial Assistant

Glen Bauer, Director of Building & Grounds

Katie Wroblewski, Organist & Bell Choir Director

Heidi Corcoran, Coordinator of Worship and Arts

Matt Buchman, Conductor of Choirs & Praise Band

Barb Towey, Organist Emerita

Amy Kurkowski, Trinity Learning Center & Preschool Director

## **2021 Church Council, Delegates, Ministries, and Committee Members**

Tina Peters, President  
Jeff Martin, Past-President  
Edye Ray, Vice President  
Donna Watson, Secretary  
Sue Acaley, Treasurer  
Kristi Ahrens-Bean, Building and Grounds  
Jon Houtman, Christian Education  
Roberta Holthusen, Christian Life and Growth  
Megan Espe, Communication  
Sue Acaley, Finance  
Diane Witte, Global & Local Outreach  
Jeff Martin, Personnel  
Joel Lemke, Stewardship  
Brenda Saeger-Wroblewski, Trinity Learning Center & Preschool  
Diane Witte, Worship  
Youth & Family/open  
Dave Acaley, Endowment & Memorial Gifts

### **BETHANY HOME DELEGATES**

Jane Gjevre, Mary Kay Doolittle

### **HOMME HOME DELEGATES**

Ozz Hagen,  
Martin & Sherry Lieber

### **CROSSWAYS CAMPING MINISTRIES**

Ozz Hagen, Wayne Sorenson

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Joel Lemke, Jeff Martin, London Cooper

### **AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Scott Bonikowske/ Rick Rothman

### **SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES**

Steve Courtney

### **TOMORROW RIVER CONFERENCE DELEGATES**

Dale & Christina Rohm

### **BOY SCOUT REPRESENTATIVE**

Forrest Grulke

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Stevens Point, Wisconsin**  
**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AGENDA**  
**Sunday, January 23, 2022**

Devotions

Approval Minutes of January 24, 2021 Meeting

Reports

Auditing Committee Report:	Scott Bonikowske
Endowment & Mem. Gifts Committee	Dave Acaley

Report of the Nominating Committee

Election of Officers and Council Members

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Council Members

Election of Committee Members and Representatives

Nominating Committee

Bethany Home Delegates

Homme Home Delegates

Synod Assembly Delegates

Audit Committee

Endowment and Memorial Gifts Committee

Tomorrow River Conference Delegates

Crossways Representatives

Boy Scout Representative

Adoption of 2022 Budget

Recognition of Outgoing Church Council Members

Closing Comments

Closing Prayer

Motion to Adjourn

**Trinity Lutheran Church  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
January 24, 2021**

**Call to Order:** President Jeff Martin called meeting via Zoom to order at 9:05 AM. A quorum was declared.

**Devotions and Opening Prayer:** Pastor Clay Schmit

**Approval of Minutes:** Dave Acaley moved, seconded by Martin Lieber to approval of the minutes of 1/26/2020 annual meeting. Motion Carried.

**Auditing Committee Report:** page 9 of report. Sue Acaley moved, seconded by Diane Witte to approve the auditing committee report as presented in annual report.

**Endowment and Memorial Gifts Committee Report:** Dave Acaley special thanks to John Lay for his work and he is dearly missed.

Rick Rothman moved, seconded by Sandy Hagness to approve of endowment and Memorial gifts.

**Nominating Committee:** Motion made by Barb Taugner, seconded by Roberta Holthusen to elect the Executive Committee and Church Council as presented in the 2021 Annual Report. Motion carried.

Approval of officers: Motion made by Bill Taugner, seconded by Dave Acaley. Motion carried.

Approval of representatives: Motion made by Sandy Hagness, seconded by Kathy Trachte. Motion carried.

**Adoption of Budget:** Presented by Sue Acaley. Page 31 of Report.

Motion made by Orwoll Hagen, seconded by Janet Swiston, to accept the 2021 annual budget as presented. Motion carried.

**Recognition of outgoing Church Council Members:** Tina Peters, President Elect, thanked outgoing members.

**Closing Prayer:** Pastor Clay Schmit. Lord's Prayer recited.

Motion to adjourn by Dave Acaley, seconded by Jan Way. Motion carried.

London Cooper  
Council Secretary

## **Report of the Nominating Committee 2021**

	<b><u>Nominee</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>
President	Tina Peters	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Vice President	Edye Ray	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Secretary	Donna Watson	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Treasurer	Sue Acaley	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Past President	Jeff Martin	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
<b><u>Council Members</u></b>		
Building & Grounds	Kristi Ahrens-Bean	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Christian Education	Jon Houtman	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Christian Life & Growth	Roberta Holthusen	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Communication	Megan Espe	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Finance	Sue Acaley	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Global & Local Outreach	Diane Witte	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Personnel	Jeff Martin	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Stewardship	Joel Lemke	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Trinity Learning Center	Brenda Saeger-Wroblewski	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Worship	Diane Witte	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2022
Youth and Family	Vacant	
<b><u>Representatives</u></b>		
Nominating	Joel Lemke Jeff Martin London Cooper	
Audit	Scott Bonikowske, Rick Rothman	
Endowment	Dave Acaley, London Cooper, Milo Harpstead, Su Melby, Gary Pucci, Keith Roeske, Kathy Trachte, Brenda Saeger- Wroblewski, and Jan Way.	
Crossways	Ozz Hagen, Wayne Sorenson	
Homme Home	Ozz Hagen, Martin and Sherry Lieber	
Synod	Steve Courtney	Second Position Vacant
Tomorrow River	Dale & Christina Rohm	
Bethany Home	Jane Gjevre Mary Kay Doolittle	
Boy Scouts	Forrest Grulke	



## **Report of the Nominating Committee 2022**

<b><u>Office</u></b>	<b><u>Nominee</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>
President	Tina Peters	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Vice President	Edye Ray	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Secretary	Donna Watson	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Treasurer	Sue Acaley	Term Ending January 2023
Past President	Jeff Martin	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
<b><u>Council Members</u></b>		
Building & Grounds	Kristi Ahrens-Bean	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Christian Education	Vacant	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2024
Christian Life & Growth	Roberta Holthusen	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2024
Communication	Megan Espe	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Finance	Sue Acaley	Term Ending January 2024
Global & Local Outreach	David Blado	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2024
Personnel	Jeff Martin	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Stewardship	Joel Lemke	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Trinity Learning Center	Brenda Saeger-Wroblewski	2 <sup>nd</sup> Term Ending January 2023
Worship	Randy Olson	1 <sup>st</sup> Term Ending January 2024
Youth and Family	Vacant	
<b><u>Representatives</u></b>		
Nominating	Rick Rothman; Amy Beversdorf; Keith Widdel; Su Melby; Tina Peters	One-year term only ending 1/2023
Audit	Scott Bonikowske; Rick Rothman	
Endowment	Dave Acaley, London Cooper, Milo Harpstead, Su Melby, Gary Pucci, Keith Roeske, Kathy Trachte, Brenda Saeger-Wroblewski, and Jan Way.	
Crossways	Oz Hagen; Todd Lewis	
Homme Home	Oz Hagen; Martin and Sherry Lieber	
Synod	Vacant	
Tomorrow River	Dale and Christina Rohm	
Bethany Home	Vacant	
Boy Scouts	Vacant	

To: The Finance Committee  
Trinity Lutheran Church

We have audited the December 31, 2020 Treasurer's Annual Report and Endowment Memorial Gifts Committee Report as published in the 2020 Trinity Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Report. We have used the audit techniques that we, as a committee, consider necessary.

The Treasurer's report is presented on a cash basis. Revenue is recognized when received rather than when earned. Expenditures are recognized when paid rather than when incurred. This method is consistent with prior years.

A balance sheet, listing assets and liabilities, is not prepared. Depreciation expense relating to fixed assets is not recognized. This is also consistent with prior years.

In our opinion, the December 31, 2020 Treasurer's Annual Report and Endowment Memorial Gifts Committee Report fairly presents the cash transactions of Trinity Lutheran Church for the year ended December 31, 2020.

Trinity Lutheran Church Audit Committee

*Trinity Lutheran Church Audit Committee*

## **Report of the Pastor**

While it is usually a bad idea to try to judge a congregation's ministry vitality by the numbers, during these ongoing pandemic days, we have not been able to observe much of our typical ministry impact. So, in lieu of better measures, I will share some of the numbers that account for the kind of impact and outreach that we have had this past year.

First, our financial picture has remained relatively strong. I'll leave the details to the treasurer, but I will thank the people of Trinity here for their strong and generous ongoing support, in spite of our need to restrict some of the ways we usually work, worship, and fellowship together.

During the past summer, we began meeting in person for worship again. Our parking lot services averaged around 50 people per Sunday. That number has been slowly rising since we opened our doors to live worship in the sanctuary. We are now averaging around 70 people between two services. In addition, we continue to have high response to our broadcast services. Sunday mornings average around 230 views (which may include several viewers per engagement) and our Wednesday evening services typically get around 150 views, many of which continue to be from other regions of the country. Sometimes anomalies occur. We had a viewership of over 600 for one of our Band led services—and a memorial service for our friend Sue Ann McAbee was broadcast on Facebook to a viewership of 840 souls. We don't actually know what these numbers mean, but they are a good indication that Trinity is reaching many people at home as they continue to exercise caution regarding a return to live worship. I want to offer my thanks to the office staff and the worship and music team for continuing to make Trinity's worship lively and engaging.

One worship number that is concrete and meaningful is that between four services, we had 233 people join us for live Christmas eve worship. What a joy it was to see so many people here together over the course of the afternoon and evening. Our online broadcasts of those services reached another 550 people.

Sadly, we have not yet found a way to return to live Sunday School. We hope that with children now being vaccinated, this will change in the coming weeks. We are starting to see young families and children returning to worship and I want to thank Todd Lewis for being available each Sunday to spend some educational time with the children each Sunday as worship concludes.

One of the pleasant surprises during this period is the number of new people who have found Trinity to be a trusted place for worship and ministry. We will soon be having a new member Sunday where the congregation can meet the several families that are eager to join us.

I will conclude my report by stating two new ministry opportunities that have developed over the past year. Area pastors and churches have founded a neighborhood helping organization called One Big Tent. It seeks to assist neighbors in need with financial, social, and administrative support. Trinity is a partner in this important community ministry. Related to One Big Tent is the desire by our congregations to host and welcome Afghan refugees that are now coming to Stevens Point. Trinity's response to this need is being handled through our Global and Local Outreach Committee.

With you all, I pray that 2022 will bring a restoration of normalcy to our lives and to Trinity's worship and ministry. God bless you all in the coming year.

**Pastor Clay Schmit**

## **Youth and Family Coordinator Report**

“Holding Loosely.” Those two words might accurately describe what we’re all doing in life right now? They appropriately enough also served as the theme for this past year’s ELCA Youth Ministry Network “Extravaganza”, an annual training and networking event I’m always excited to be a part of. Like many things, the February 4<sup>th</sup>-6th opportunity, which is typically held in-person, moved online. Yet the support and encouragement those days together offered (for all 1700+ of us connected only through technology), was so needed and I was incredibly grateful for. How can each of us during this time of so many challenges in our world hold more loosely to our own plans and trust more greatly in the love and grace and promises of God?

This year at Trinity, I have done my best to lean into those promises every day as we navigate this very different time in life and ministry, trying to limit risk to youth and families whenever possible, but still sharing faith together and offering opportunities, support and connection.

Our Confirmation program has remained active. The Wednesday night first and second-year group wrapped up online in early May, completing their overview year on the books of the Bible. Families were surveyed and we elected not to attend Confirmation Camp this past June, due to changes necessitated by COVID-19. Over the summer and early fall, I met with members of the third year Confirmation group, as they prepared for the next step on their faith journeys. On Reformation Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, the 10 of them affirmed the promises of their baptism, as surrounded by family and friends, they were Confirmed at a very special in-person worship service. This fall’s Wednesday group has started the year meeting in- person, socially distanced each week in Trinity’s sanctuary.

On the morning of May 30th, we gathered for worship in Trinity’s parking lot to celebrate the graduation of 21 incredible high school seniors at our annual Baccalaureate Service. There just aren’t the words to convey all they have meant to me and to our congregation, but this one Sunday each year, gives us a small chance to share our prayers and hope for their futures. They are already greatly missed!

In the Spring, we prepared 37 care packages which were sent off to Trinity college students. I met with youth for lunches each week over the summer months and held several informational meetings in anticipation of our group being a part of next summer’s still currently planned ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis. Our team took part in WWSP’s “Trivia 51” Weekend and we have continued to offer online opportunities for youth to connect over Google Meet.

In November, we kicked off, “Faith Stories and More,” a shorter Sunday morning offering of stories and activities, for our youngest members, as they gather toward the end of each service. I regularly share children’s messages during worship and have provided email and online resources to school-age families throughout the year. The responses to a recent survey, which was emailed to families, supported this more cautious approach before a return to a larger in-person faith formation, such as Sunday School.

At Trinity, I coordinate and often write the “Inspiring Worship All Week” devotions by members, which are included in the Trinity Weekly emails and found on our website. I assisted with the Holiday Basket Project, as Trinity once again came together to sponsor 4 families this holiday season. Thanks so much to Andria Bena for all her work on this ministry! I help manage and stock, along with so many faithful others, Trinity’s “Little Free Pantry,” an important outreach to those in our community facing food insecurity.

I continue to work with Trinity's technology needs, not only in the office, but throughout the building. This year we replaced nearly all of our computers, due to outdated operating systems and navigated repeated email and server issues, which have become a longer-range project. The move to online livestreaming of our worship services, prompted us not only to expand components and software of our sanctuary sound and video booth, but its physical footprint, as well. We are very grateful for all the time that Trinity member Steve Jensen and friend Jim Martin shared as they constructed the needed addition to that space. Thanks also to the technology team of Pat Gerbitz, Michael Martin and Charlie McKee for the invaluable resources they have been to me and many ways they support Trinity in the area of technology. Thanks also to all those who have assisted in any way with livestreaming, slides or camera operations to make sure our worship services are available to those who cannot be here in person.

In Stevens Point, I serve as a member of the Hunger and Poverty Prevention Partnership of Portage County and co-chair the Empty Bowls Committee. I meet regularly with a group of youth ministry leaders in our area and work closely with Crossways Camping Ministry whenever possible.

In the midst of so much uncertainty and change, you should know that we are blessed (and I am every day) to have and work with the staff that Trinity does, especially Doris and Tammy in the office, Glen taking care of our building and grounds and Amy in the Learning Center (as well as Melissa and her entire staff). They may not be as visible to everyone, especially during this time, but every day the work they have never stopped doing, and the people they are, keep our ministry and mission moving forward.

I'm so grateful for the support this past year of Youth and Family Committee members Sue Acaley and Christine Kienbaum, who have been advocates, sounding boards and so much more. I'm thankful for the parents and families who have been a part of events, programming and conversations and the youth of this church who are gifts in every experience we have been fortunate enough to share.

We have no way of knowing what things will look like when all that we're currently experiencing is over (and even when that will be?). So much has already changed, but I hold out hope that God's plans for Trinity will emerge from this time and continue to connect and carry us the days ahead. Thank you so much for all your support and prayers. I'm honored every day to be a part of the Trinity family!

**Todd Lewis**

## **President's Report**

2021 arrived with the promise of a COVID vaccine and the hope our lives would return to “normal.” The Worship Committee and Church Council began hopeful discussions, always with the guidance of the reopening task force, of when we could return to in-person worship, Sunday School classes, and Youth Group meetings. The magnitude of the pandemic, the subsequent variants, and the diverse attitudes surrounding protective behaviors have not diminished our hope but have, instead, reinforced our resiliency, our perseverance, our faithfulness, and our ability to adapt to what comes our way.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our excellent, dedicated staff. It isn't easy fostering relationships and doing ministry when you can't be in close proximity let alone in the same room. Thank you to Pastor Clay, Todd, Doris, Tammy, and Glen for forging a trusting working relationship. A thank you to our music staff, Katie, Matt, and Heidi and their volunteers for using their talents to enhance our worship experience.

Our thanks to Amy Kurkowski and her staff for achieving a 5-Star rating for the Learning Center. Amy stayed abreast of and applied for available government funds which were advantageous during the few closures the Center experienced. Amy's abilities in keeping a competent and caring staff, maintaining good staff morale in a challenging time, and keeping the children and staff healthy is a credit to her.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank the Church Council for their service. Trinity is very fortunate to have the leadership of these committed individuals. Thank you to Edye Ray, Sue Acaley, Jeff Martin, Donna Watson, Jon Houtman, Megan Espe, Diane Witte, Kristi Bean, Roberta Holthusen, Joel Lemke, and Brenda Saeger-Wroblewski. It is a pleasure to work with you.

A few highlights of 2021:

We completed our pledge to Crossways Camping Ministry sooner than planned. We enhanced our worship through upgrades to our technology. And we made the building more inviting for our members and visitors by changing the doors on the west side of the building.

Trinity Learning Center provided essential child care services for families in Portage County.

We enjoyed the outdoors during our parking lot services and we were able to begin worshipping in the sanctuary. Thank you to the volunteers behind the scenes and our worship assistants that make it all possible.

We confirmed 10 students and celebrated their accomplishment with their families.

Trinity provided a beacon of hope and light to our members, friends, and the community through another year of uncertainty. Thank you to you, the members, for all you do to support Trinity through your gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

**Tina Peters- Council President**

## **Buildings & Grounds Committee**

The Buildings and Grounds Committee conscientiously carried out its mission to maintain Trinity's facilities and grounds.

### **2021 Accomplishments:**

- WPS brought Trinity's gas line up to code by routing our gas line to the outside and installing a new gas meter on the east side of the building. A wooden box with a lid was made to encase the underground pipe lines.
- Fresh air controls were installed on our 10 air handlers. This will improve the rate of air exchange throughout the building.
- Partitions were made and installed in the sound booth to provide social distancing during the peak of the pandemic.
- A gradual change throughout the building to lever door handles will be made. This year the church office was done.
- Preparation for the TLC&P's climber and rubber flooring was done.
- The north east exterior door #6 and the west door #2, with the mail slot were replaced.
- A deteriorating baffle for the insinkerator was installed.
- A water softening system was installed for the dishwasher.
- The first floor north hallway and landing had new flooring installed.
- The circuit board on the Booster Heater in the kitchen was replaced.
- Two areas next to the south side of the building in the playground area and around a tree in the south playground were prepared and green artificial grass was installed.
- The sound booth was extended.
- Two lights to brighten a dark hallway by the Coke machine were installed.
- LED T8 lights have been installed in the first floor classrooms and hallway.
- The two ash trees by the south entrance were treated.
- Two new floor mats will be placed in the west entrance.
- LED lights have been installed in the Library/Chapel valance.

- Security cameras at the south entrance and TLC&P entrance were installed.
- Various floors and carpets have been cleaned.
- Throughout the year there were various HVAC and plumbing repairs.
- Ground's work done: weeding, trimming, planting, transplanting, removing the bushes along Rogers Street and sprinkler work.

***1 Peter 4:10: Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful steward's of God's grace in its various forms*** was witnessed through the leadership, planning and organization of the Building & Grounds Director and Building and Grounds Committee members: Glen Bauer, Kristi Ahrens-Bean, Steve Chizzo, Steve Jensen, Tom Johnson, Russ Prusak, Gail Pucci and Jerry Trachte. We were also blessed with the time and efforts of congregational members and TLC&P's staff and parents in these accomplishments.

**Respectfully, Glen Bauer, Building & Grounds Director and The Building & Grounds Committee**

## **Christian Education Committee**

### **Sunday School**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sunday school was cancelled. During part of the year, Todd Lewis forwarded to participating Sunday school families various materials relating to the current church season. Starting in November during worship, Todd met with children in the Narthex to share a story and project.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

Pastor Clay met with families to discuss Baptism. The pastor also led Communion preparation classes when possible during the year.

### **Splash!**

Splash! is a faith formation program that includes resources for families with young children who are pre-Sunday School age. Yearly resources are given to each family including a Bible, songs, and other great tips to help parents live out their Baptismal promises. Mary Lou Bonikowske is the coordinator for this program. This year 1<sup>st</sup> Bibles were given to 1-year olds, and baby blankets and sweaters were delivered to newborns.

### **Confirmation**

On Reformation Sunday, October 31, ten tenth-graders were confirmed at the Affirmation of Baptism service. Currently, there are 14 students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation that meet weekly on Wednesday evenings during the school year. FaithInkubators, along with Bible Project, are the curriculums being used. The program centers on a review of the Old and New Testaments and Luther's Small Catechism. Serving the church and the community, when safe and appropriate, is also emphasized. There are seven 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the third year Mentor Program that met periodically throughout the year.



These students are working to delve deeper into their faith working with mentors to form their Faith Statements and develop their Faith Project while continuing service, when possible, to the church and community. Students did not attend camp this year due to covid concerns.

### **Adult Education**

Pastor Clay led several small-group discussions during the year (some virtually).

### **Operation Christmas Child**

Greg and Krista Olson coordinated this program. Members from the church helped to fill shoe boxes to disperse to children around the world.

### **Other Activities**

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, Soup Suppers were not offered during Lent.

### **Committee Members who served during 2021 include:**

Jackie Beversdorf, DeeAnn Donahue, Melissa Fehring, Pam Houtman, Rose Nelson.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**DeeAnn Donahue, Christian Education Committee Chair**

## **Communication Committee**

The mission of the Communication Committee is to facilitate good communication among the pastor, church staff, officers, and membership of Trinity Lutheran Church and to the community. *Committee members currently include Megan Espe, Dan Jirovec, Christina Rohm, Sybil Strupp, and Pat Gerbitz.*

Our primary role is providing recordings of our services. We will continue to support the livestreaming and video-recording of the services along with several other people controlling the audio, graphic, and computer requirements.

Our committee arranges advertising for Christmas, Easter, and other special events. This year only Christmas ads were placed in local papers.

Our committee chair assists with proofreading and other office duties as needed and serves on the Technology Committee.

The Trinity Library Committee, chaired by Sybil Strupp, is an active subcommittee of the Communication Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

**Pat Gerbitz, chairperson**

## **Trinity Library Subcommittee**

The Trinity Library Subcommittee of the Communication Committee continues to acquire and organize books for ease of access to the Trinity community, in accordance with the mission of Trinity Lutheran Church.

In 2021, after meeting in the parking lot in May, the committee resumed monthly meetings in the library area in July, adhering to COVID requirements. We continue to meet there on the third Tuesday of each month at 1:30pm.

The committee purchased books from the Book Look and reviewed many donated books, adding approximately 100 titles to the indoor collection. We also maintain the Little Free Library next to the Ellis St. entrance to Trinity's parking lot, adding books when there is space.

Understandably, library book circulation has been low during the year, but as more people are in the building, the numbers of books checked out are increasing. The Little Free Library continues to be well-used with a constant stream of books removed and added.

*2021 library committee: Kathy Bryer, Pam Enerson, Pat Gerbitz, Jane Gjevre, Roberta Holthusen, Wanda Lay, Cathy Palmini, Sharon Rothman, and Sybil Strupp (chair).*

**Submitted by Sybil Strupp**

## **Global and Local Outreach Committee**

The Global and Local Outreach (GLO) Committee expresses appreciation to all Trinity members who, through their generosity, make these ministries possible. The GLO committee has as its mission “to encourage and provide opportunities for the congregation in telling the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed to all the people within and without the community of faith”. This report details those ways in which we carried out our mission in 2021.

Due to the pandemic, our coordination of greeters for Sunday services has been put on hold, as has the fair-trade coffee and chocolate sales. We continue to send a note to first time visitors to Trinity, acknowledging their visit and inviting them back to Trinity.

The Stephen Ministers at Trinity have faithfully provided an important ministry to congregational and community members in need of additional support. Throughout the year those Trinity Stephen Ministers who have provided Christian care are: Sue Acaley, Barb Brilowski, Sue Clussman, Katie Ellenz, Sandra Hagness, Gail Pucci and Bill Taugner. We thank them for their caregiving.

On a rotating basis, four food pantries (Operation Bootstrap, Interfaith Food Pantry, Mobile Pantry and the Salvation Army) receive our monthly donations of monetary support, as well as the continued donation of some food and household items. Donations for 2021 for the food pantries totaled \$1,580. A total of \$2,495 was received for World Hunger.

The GLO committee maintains contact with Rev. Philip Knutson, Missionary in South Africa.

The Loose Change appeal included receipt of funding of \$4,452.04 for: Bread for The World, the Stevens Point Warming Center, St. Katharina's/S. Africa Covid relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, United Way Community Diaper Drive, Lutheran Social Services, Bethany Home -Waupaca, Lutheran World Relief, Project Fresh Start, Empty Bowls, LSS- Afghan refugees, and UWSP Cupboard. The appeal for school supplies and monetary donations for the Lutheran World Relief –School Kits and Project Fresh Start was held jointly with Charity Circle and the appeal for Empty Bowls was held jointly with the Trinity Youth. Items were collected and sent to the Afghan refugees housed at Fort McCoy. Additionally, \$215 was donated through Lenten Coins to benefit CAP Services Emergency Shelter. Holiday Baskets, co-sponsored with the Youth and Family committee, provided for four families. Thank you to Andria Bena and Todd Lewis for organizing this project.

***GLO committee members: David Blado, Sue Clussman, Anne Hoffmann, Sharon Rothman, Janet Swiston, Diane Witte***

## **Personnel Committee**

Other than preparing a budget and reviewing benefits for the upcoming year, 2021 was uneventful for the Personnel Committee. We, as a congregation, are very blessed with employees who are both flexible enough to adjust to new COVID environs/requirements as well as being very competent in their respective positions. As a result, we had no need to advertise, recruit, or hire which is pretty amazing in view of the labor market we faced over the past many months.

Thus, this year's report is more of a "thank you" to our staff for adjusting to the needs of our congregation as we navigated an unusual, challenging, and difficult year.

I would also like to thank the members of our Personnel Committee for their willingness to handle issues via phone, zoom meetings and emails.

Respectfully,

**William Beversdorf**

## **Stewardship Committee**

Let's take the opportunity to celebrate rediscovery and what it means. Let's recognize that rebound and rebuilding are terms that with the right use have positive and powerful meaning. 2021 has been a year of rebound and rebuilding in lot of ways for all of us. Our lives have taken on routines that are new to us, we have different expectations and reimagined views of our world around us from just a short time ago.

Through all the change, one thing remains very clear. The congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church are generous people. Generous in ways that are meaningful. Prayers are offered, time is given, money and other resources are shared because it is understood that right now, they are needed as much as they ever were. It is a wonderful community of faithful and loving people at Trinity.

With all the thanks and recognition going to the congregation, the Stewardship committee is proud to report that the giving levels dipped only once in the past couple years, but we can proudly report that we are still on a growth projection when you look at the last four years. This is something the whole church should celebrate! Coming through a difficult time without suffering loss is something to recognize with appreciation. The committee is grateful for the generous responses to our campaign efforts.

Among the special fundraising efforts for the 2022 season was one titled, "investing in our community." Through this effort we will be giving more than usual to our local groups that help with homelessness and hunger. This is a great showing of how the mission of Trinity Lutheran Church is responding to the needs of the community. The other two special fundraising efforts will continue to improve new and innovative ways to deliver our message to our members and the world ("Investing in ourselves"), as well as making improvements to our beautiful building to improve the worship experience ("Investing in our home"). The foundation of the entire stewardship effort makes up the support of Ministry Excellence. "Ministry Excellence" is how we identify that our staff and facility are critical to our efforts.

Because of the continued support, we can say we are supporting the impressive staff and facility structure we have and continue to focus on the Church's mission and goals.

It is with grateful hearts and celebration of generosity that we submit this annual report to the congregation.

Blessings,

**Trinity Stewardship Committee**

**Joel Lemke - Chairperson**

**Sarah Wolf – Stewardship Coordinator**

**Tina Peters – Council President**

**Pastor Clay Schmit**

## Giving Celebration for 2021

\$	415.00	Mobile Food Pantry
\$	102.56	St. Katharina's Covid-19 Relief in South Africa
\$	27.24	Bread For The World
\$	156.00	Warming Center – Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church
\$	1,301.56	Lutheran Disaster Response ELCA
\$	214.59	United Way Diaper Drive
\$	548.37	ThankOffering
\$	215.00	CAP Services – The Crisis Center
\$	300.00	Boy Scout Troop 293
\$	260.00	Lutheran World Relief School Kits
\$	266.00	Tomorrow River Conference
\$	201.00	Salvation Army – Hope Center
\$	425.00	Interfaith Food Pantry of Portage County
\$	539.00	Operation Bootstrap
\$	916.28	Bethany Home, Waupaca, WI
\$	750.00	Homme Home, Wittenberg, WI
\$	100.00	Project Fresh Start
\$	245.00	Empty Bowls
\$	280.00	Holiday Baskets
\$	300.00	Asia Pacific Disaster Response
\$	50.00	Trinity's Local Benevolence – Helping those in need.
\$	3,534.00	Crossways Camping Ministries
\$	2,495.00	World Hunger Appeal
\$	77.41	Lutheran Social Services
\$	5,000.00	Missionary Support (The Rev. Dr. Philip J and Lou Knutson)
\$	9,000.00	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (% Synod and % National)
\$	15,475.00	Support members attending Public and Lutheran colleges
\$	1,460.88	LSS – Afghan Refugees
\$	40.52	UWSP Cupboard

1	Baby Blankets and Sweaters for newborns
4	Prayer Shawls given
21	Afghans given to Graduates
37	Care Packages to Youth in College or Military
143	Baby Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief
120	Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief
239	Quilts for LWR
7	Quilts to Operation Bootstrap
203	School Kits for Lutheran World Relief
201	Operation Christmas Child Boxes

## **Trinity Learning Center & Preschool**



2021 once again was a year of reflection on what really is important in life, as we look back and reflect, we truly believe that it is faith, family and health. This year started out great, we had full classrooms, and we were fortunate to keep the center open and focus on providing a positive learning environment with a dedicated staff who was ready to fill the year with lots of joy, love and learning.

This really made us think of what we need in life and what we could live without. Our staff and families came together and supported each other through these difficult times. September through December, we did have a few closures due to Covid. This did affect our budget, the decision to close when we needed to was not an easy one, on a positive note, we did help prevent the spread of this crazy virus and keeping everyone healthy and safe is truly the most important thing.

I feel it brought us together with each other and even though we couldn't celebrate our special events we found other ways to still reach out and work together. We still made cards and delivered them to spread kindness and joy to others. Our most exciting news is that we had the formal young star rating, and we not only raised our level back up to a 5-STAR rating they said we are rated as one of the highest scores throughout the state.

So, as we remember 2021 we will not think about what numbers looked like and what events we may have missed, we will look back on how everyone came together as a family to provide the children with a safe and nurturing learning environment.

**Amy Kurkowski**

**Trinity Learning Center & Preschool**

## **Worship Committee**

Although the behind-the-scenes activity of the Worship committee has continued, there have been fewer meetings and more decisions made via emails and phone calls. In April the Worship committee requested monies from memorial gifts designated for worship and held by the Endowment and Memorial Gifts Committee for purchase of an outdoor public address system. This was approved and the public address system was purchased and utilized during the outdoor services. Also, in April, the Worship committee requested monies from memorial gifts designated for music and worship and held by the Endowment and Memorial Gifts Committee for purchase of an electric piano. This was approved and the piano has been ordered and has been shipped, but has not yet arrived.

Parking-Lot Services started at Easter and continued through the summer. The Worship committee set guidelines for opening worship in the Sanctuary, which was started in July, transitioning to two indoor services as the Parking-lot services were closed down as the weather turned less hospitable.

A Thanksgiving Eve service (minus the pie social) was held, and Wednesday evening services, featuring the Holden evening prayer service, were held during Advent, with four Christmas Eve services, plus a Christmas Day service.

During our time of altered worship venues, Su Melby and Diane Beversdorf have maintained the displaying of the appropriate paraments and banners, Deb Weier has coordinated the recruitment of ushers when needed, Barb Taugner has coordinated the recruitment of lay assistants, Diane Witte and Carol Vallely have provided the altar loaves for the blessing of communion, Diane Witte has kept the oil candles filled and coordinated the availability of the “kits” for communion and helped those receiving first communion bake the bread used in their first communion. Also during this time we have been able to enjoy the Trinity choir, sometimes pre-recorded in a virtual setting, the bell choir and the Trinity band. Our thanks to these many people, the ones mentioned and also the ones that have volunteered for the many positions that must be filled to facilitate the worship services here at Trinity.

***Worship Committee members: Duane Karna, Martin Lieber, Randy Olson, Barb Towey, Deb Weier, Diane Witte. Non-voting members: Matt Buchman, Heidi Corcoran, Pastor Clay Schmit, Katie Wroblewski.***

## **Music and Arts**

### **2021 Moments of Note**

What a year! The music staff has worked hard to continue to bring meaningful and beautiful worship experiences to the Trinity Congregation during this historic year of COVID-19. We are fortunate to have been able to utilize the choir for special music, have been able to record a couple of bell choir pieces, and have been blessed with the use of many of the Lutheran Colleges choral works. We have also utilized social media to broadcast our worship services online and have reached worshippers across the country. The broadcast booth personnel have become a vital part of our worship experiences. We are so thankful for their assistance.



As 2021 went on, we provided more opportunities for worship at Trinity. We started the year with a 5:00 p.m. Wednesday Facebook Live service and a 10:45 a.m. Facebook Live service on Sunday morning. On Easter Sunday, we began providing a 9:00 a.m. parking lot service. Special thanks to Matt who set up for these services and used his own equipment to accompany. This 9:00 a.m. parking lot service continued into the fall. The 9:00 a.m. service moved into the sanctuary at the end of September. Currently, the attendance at this service averages from 45 to 70 and it is the service we are now videotaping for online worship. We began inviting worshippers into the 10:45 service in summer. Attendance at this service is much smaller. In 2022, we will be turning this service into a more informal and meditative service for those who prefer a quieter worship experience. The 5:00 p.m. Facebook Live service on Wednesday night continues.

As we look forward to 2022, the Trinity Worship Team hopes to continue to provide meaningful worship experiences for our congregational family.

**Submitted by Katie Wroblewski**

## **Trinity Lutheran Church Women**

The activities of the Trinity Lutheran Church Women (TLCW) in 2021 were coordinated by a Steering Committee composed of Secretary Margaret Pitzrick, Treasurer Nina Heckler, Jane Goudreau, and Linda Woerpel-Radoll.

TLCW is affiliated with "Women of the ELCA", whose Mission Purpose is as follows: *"As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."*

Trinity's active Bible Study circles are Charity Circle which meets virtual the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m., and Joy Circle which meets at church the third Monday of the month at one.

*The following explains the many projects that TLCW is involved with at Trinity.*

**Rummage Sales** – No sales this year due to Covid.

**Quilts** - The quilting project at Trinity is alive and well. 246 quilts were made by seventeen women who participated during our work days, which are the second Tuesday and the fourth Thursday of each month. Also, several women spend many hours working at home to cut quilt blocks and sew quilt tops and backs. We rely on the congregation for donations of fabric. The quilt batting is purchased with rummage sale and Thrivent Action Team funds. Quilts were sent to the Lutheran World Relief Distribution Center and also distributed 7 locally through Operation Bootstrap. Wrapping a quilt around the shoulders of poor or hurting people of the world is like sending a hug and a prayer.

**Baby Care Kits** - 143 baby care kits were assembled. A kit consists of 2 receiving blankets, 2 shirts, 2 sleepers, 4 diapers, 1 hand towel, two 4 oz. bars of soap, 2 diaper pins, 1 hat and 1 sweater. Most of the sweaters are knit by women of the congregation and others by special friends.

**School Kits** - Charity Circle assembled 203 school kits. A school kit consists of 4 notebooks, 1 scissor, 1 ruler, 1 pencil sharpener, 6 pencils, 6 pens, 1 eraser, 1 box of crayons, and 1 string cloth bag.

**Personal Care Kits** - 120 personal care kits were assembled. A kit consists of 1 bath towel, two 4 oz. bars of soap, 1 toothbrush, 1 comb, and 1 nail clipper. Toothpaste is added later by LWR.

Thrivent Action Team funds as well as participation of the congregation with monetary and needed item donations has helped tremendously to enable us to assemble and distribute these kits in significant numbers. All help is much appreciated.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry** - Carlene Schanck started the Prayer Shawl Ministry in 2006 in an effort to comfort members of the congregation who may need encouragement and/or support. The Prayer Shawls are blessed during a church service. Four prayer shawls were delivered in 2021. Three were given to Pastor Diane Dardon' to use in her ministry.

**Afghans for Graduates** – An afghan is knit for each of our high school graduates. An afghan was presented to each of our 21 graduates in 2021.

**Sweaters for Newly Baptized and Trinity Day Care Babies** - Each newly baptized child receives a hand-knit sweater and blanket. These are delivered during a visit from a SPLASH Program representative. A sweater is given to each new baby who attends Trinity Day Care. One sweater was given out in 2021.

**Thankoffering** - is an opportunity to give thanks with a monetary contribution for our many blessings during the year. Thankoffering Sunday was held November 21<sup>st</sup>. We again this year appreciated and enjoyed the message given by Rev. Diane Dardon', Pastor Clay Schmit's sister. Donations were received and sent on to Women of the ELCA for ongoing and special projects.

**Funeral Luncheons** - Lois Hagen coordinated and advised the monthly teams of Funeral Coordinators.

**Mitten Tree** - Each December a Mitten Tree is set up. This year a donation box was provided by the church door and the congregation is very generous with their donations of mittens, hats, and scarves which are then sent to Operation Bootstrap for distribution.

Please see the 2021 Trinity Women's Treasurer's Report on the following page to see the organizations and causes supported by the TLCW.

**THANK YOU** to all who participated in any way to the success of this year's TLCW program. We also extend a special "thank you" to the many men of this congregation who lend support through helping hands and strong backs.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**TLCW Steering Committee**  
**Margaret Pitzrick, Secretary**  
**Nina Heckler, Treasurer**  
**Linda Woerpel-Radoll, Jane Goudreau**

## **2021 TRINITY WOMEN'S TREASURER'S REPORT**

<b>Balance 12/31/2020</b>	<b>\$1,415.58</b>
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### **Receipts:**

Thank offering	\$548.37
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<b>Total 2021 Receipts</b>	<b>\$548.37</b>
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### **Disbursements:**

Quilt Supplies	\$242.16
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Thankoffering	\$548.37
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Lutheran World Relief projects	\$151.44
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<b>Total 2021 Disbursements</b>	<b>\$941.97</b>
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<b>Balance</b>	<b>12/31/2021</b>	<b>\$1,021.98</b>
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<b>Savings Balance</b>	<b>\$1,975.88</b>
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**Submitted by Nina Heckler, Treasurer**

## From Our Church Records, 2021

	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
<b>Membership, 12/31/2020</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>783</b>
Members received during 2021:		
By baptism:    Children (15 yrs. and younger)	4	
By baptism:    adults	0	0
By affirmation of faith	6	6
By transfer from ELCA congregations	0	0
By transfer from other Lutheran congregations	0	0
From non-Lutheran congregations	0	0
Members reactivated	0	0
Baptized members confirmed during 2021	--	10
<b>Total added</b>	<hr/> <b>10</b>	<hr/> <b>16</b>
Members removed during 2020:		
By death	5	5
By transfer to other ELCA congregations	5	5
By transfer to other Lutheran congregations	0	0
To non-Lutheran congregations	1	1
Removed by choice; no transfer	43	43
<b>Total removed</b>	<hr/> <b>54</b>	<hr/> <b>54</b>
<b>Membership as of December 31, 2021</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>745</b>

## **Ministerial Acts**

### ***Baptisms***

Diana Lili Carbajal Montoya

Gemma Rose Nelson

Miles Edward Slattery

Bradley James Strahota

### ***Weddings***

Mary Lutz and Quinton Kluck

### ***Funerals***

Donna L. Kuhls

Sharon L. Labrie

Ruth E. Lodahl

Ed J. Martinsen

### ***Death***

Olaf E. Aanrud

### ***New Members***

Andrea Nelson

Christine and Clair Strahota

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## OPENING LITURGY



Today our congregation gathers in prayer and hope to begin another year of ministry. We bring with us the memory of a year like no other, even as we move into a future that we cannot yet imagine. Yet even now, as in every age, God is our refuge and strength. In times of plenty and want, in times of conflict and peace, in times of growing and pruning, we remember:

**God has called us for such a time as this.**

We remember the past year with lament and gratitude. We have lost so much, and so much still feels uncertain. We have also witnessed God's hand at work in new and unexpected ways. We delight at hidden seeds bearing surprising and wonderful fruit. When our own resources fail, when we cannot predict the future, when we must rely on God alone, we remember:

**God has called us for such a time as this.**

We celebrate this moment and the many ways God has held us together as a community. We give thanks for the gift of our church building and the welcome it provides, even as we bless God for the marvel of technology and the new bonds of connection it makes possible. When our bodies need sanctuary, when our minds need expanding, when your grace must transcend our limitations, we remember:

**God has called us for such a time as this.**

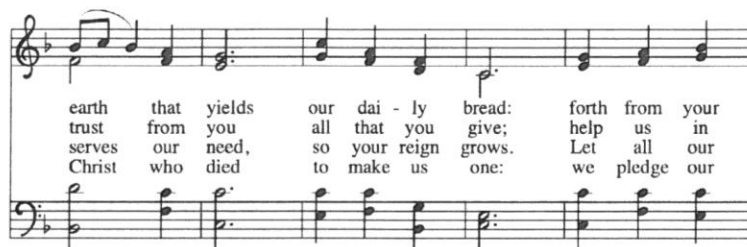
We look ahead to the road we will travel together this year. We anticipate and receive with joy the new gifts God's love has planned. We pray for the grace to let go of what has served its holy purpose. When we are trailblazers or followers, when we are seekers or visionaries, when we must walk by faith and not by sight, we remember:

**God has called us for such a time as this.**

And so we pray: Grace our meeting, O God, with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the Spirit who has guided the church from the beginning, the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, the Spirit who sends us as healers and restorers of your beloved world. You are the source of our life together. You are the rock and cornerstone.

**You have called us for such a time as this.**

### God of the Fertile Fields



*All Creation Sings* #1063

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**O God,  
you have called your servants  
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,  
by paths as yet untrodden,  
through perils unknown.  
Give us faith to go out with good courage,  
not knowing where we go,  
but only that your hand is leading us  
and your love supporting us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen. (ELW, p. 317)**

Change and the need for creativity have become constants over the last year and a half in many aspects of life, including the church. This was the case for Living Christ Lutheran Church in Flagstaff, Ariz., even before a global pandemic caused many of us to rethink what it means to be church. Generosity from all three expressions of the ELCA (the churchwide organization, the Grand Canyon Synod and members of Living Christ) helped turn a congregation “on the road out of town, near the mall” into an online presence reaching over 500 people a week from Phoenix to the Philippines. (Read more about Living Christ in the current issue of “Stories of Faith in Action” at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).)

Many other congregations have found new ways to connect both when in person worship was impossible and when congregations began to return to their sanctuaries. Generosity, especially through Mission Support, helped us find and support these new ways of being connected. Early in the pandemic, ELCA Worship launched the “Worship in the Home” webpage, with Scripture, hymn links, prayers and reflections for each Sunday.

These resources were and continue to be used in congregations across the ELCA—even at Sitka Lutheran Church in Alaska, whose members printed and handdelivered “Worship in the Home” resources to fellow members without internet access.

Change and creativity have taught us many things. As Pastor Sandra Rudd of Sitka Lutheran Church noted, “The pandemic was a stark illustration of the fact that the church is not a building. A lot of people say that, but we didn’t fully know it until we didn’t have a building to use. We learned that there are many ways to be connected as the church.” Throughout the pandemic, the ELCA has changed and adapted, doing ministry in new and creative ways, because of the generosity of its members. Even now, you may be gathering in a new way for your annual meeting, to discern how you will steward the gifts shared generously with your congregation to do ministry in your community and beyond. As you have these important conversations, remember that your gifts of time, talent and resources have helped create new spaces beyond our walls and buildings where we continue to worship, serve and love God and each other.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021